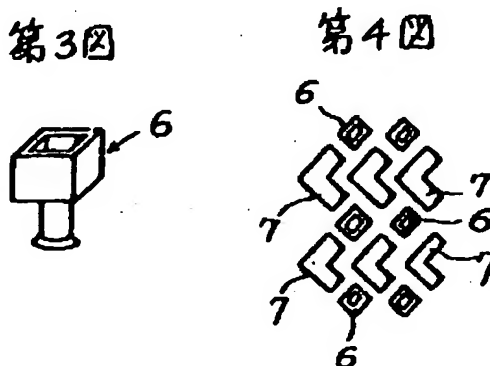


REMARKS:

Claims 1, 2, and 4 are pending in the application. In the Office Action dated May 9, 2006, the Examiner rejected claims 1, 2, and 4 under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Zetterstrom in view of Miyazaki. These rejections are respectfully traversed.

The Examiner referred to Miyazaki as disclosing "protruding ends from a shoulder portion of a tire, rings are formed as the protruding parts continue around the edge of the [tire], which is known to be circular, therefore creating rings." Applicant does not dispute that each row of Miyazaki's spikes 6 and blocks 7 takes the shape of a ring. However, each individual protrusion, spikes 6 and blocks 7 as cited by the Examiner, takes the shape of either a spike or a block as shown below in Figs. 3 and 4 of Miyazaki:



Miyazaki simply does not disclose or suggest the limitation in inventive claim 1 that "each of said protruding ends comprises a ring shape" (emphasis added). The shape of the inventive protruding ends, as described in paragraph 20 of the instant specification, serves to reduce lateral force of the tire. This purpose is further set forth in inventive claim 1 by the limitation "protruding ends...for...reducing a lateral force on the tire." This limitation is further not disclosed or suggested in Miyazaki. Miyazaki spikes 6 and blocks 7 are for minimizing slip, not reducing lateral forces (abstract).

Applicant respectfully asserts that Zetterstrom and Miyazaki, taken alone or in combination, do not disclose each and every claim limitation. As such, the requirements for *prima facie* obviousness have not been met. See M.P.E.P. 2142.

In view of the foregoing, Applicant believes all claims now pending in this application are in condition for allowance. The issuance of a formal Notice of Allowance is respectfully requested.

Authorization is granted to charge any outstanding fees due at this time for the continued prosecution of this matter to Morgan, Lewis & Bockius LLP Deposit Account No. 50-0310 (matter no. 060945-0137).

Respectfully submitted,



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August 2, 2006

Date